

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

<b>Institution: Newcastle University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 34 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory</b>
<b>Title of case study: Challenging the disciplines: generating creative collaboration and public dialogue between sculpture, architecture and craft</b>
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>

Andrew Burton's practice-based visual arts research, presented through international public exhibitions, commissions, illustrated lectures, conference presentations and publications has impacted on international **cultural life** and **public discourse** around the creative intersection between the worlds of sculpture, ceramics, architecture and craft. This research has:

- a) provided opportunities for public audiences to experience unique artworks which embody and combine an articulation of fine art and craft sensibilities, methods and skills;
- b) stimulated practitioner-led debate around the relationships between the practices and educational disciplines of sculpture, ceramics, architecture and craft.

<b>2. Underpinning research</b>
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Andrew Burton is Professor of Fine Art and has been employed at Newcastle University since 1986. The focus of this impact case study is on his practice-based explorations into the relationships between sculpture, ceramics, architecture and craft particularly on his body of research into the use of ceramic brick in sculpture and his work with artisans in India. Burton's work explores the links between materials and their wider social and cultural uses. In using low value, locally sourced materials and hand-made production processes his work explores the (assumed) division between 'artist' and 'artisan', and questions our (Western) approach towards the way objects are made. Burton's research outputs are concentrated on the creation of unique sculptural artworks and their public display in group and solo exhibitions and as public realm commissions. The reach and significance of this research is evidenced by: the international profile of Burton's projects; inclusion in national and international exhibitions; award of prizes by international juries; invitations to give lectures and present at conferences in the UK and in Europe; monograph and catalogue publications; and articles about his work in influential art, architecture and crafts magazines.



*Jug*, 2013, Aarhus, Denmark



*Harker's Wall*, 2007, Newcastle upon Tyne

Since the mid 2000s Burton's research has investigated the nature of material objects and the industrial and artisanal processes of making. Many of his works, such as *Harker's Wall* (1) (pictured above right) are manifested as temporary structures, built from recycled components of earlier works, presented on both an architectural and miniature scale. Burton's research in this area was developed during artist residency experiences at the Sanskriti Foundation in New Delhi, India (1) (supported by grants from Arts Council England and the British Council) and at the European Ceramics Work Centre (EKWC), an international interdisciplinary workplace for artists, designers and architects in The Netherlands. This research has led to the production of a series of temporary time-based installations and permanently sited sculptures (2, 3, 4), exhibited at venues in the UK and abroad, including Dutch Design Week (Eindhoven, 2009), the 2008 World Congress of Archaeology (Dublin, 2008), 'Art in the Workplace' programme at Canary Wharf, London (2008), the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, 'S'Imbrique: Les Autours de la Brique', (Beauvais, France, 2011), the National Crafts Museum, Delhi (2011) at the Centre for European and Chinese Art,

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Xiamen, China (2011) and Sculpture by the Sea, Aarhus, Denmark (2013) (pictured above left). Some works are now permanently sited, e.g. *Chimney*, as part of the Canary Wharf public art collection. In contrast, and demonstrating Burton’s recycling approach to materials and construction, his second work for the Canary Wharf ‘Brickworks’ show, *Cathedral* was dismantled and remade in new iterations for the 2009 British Ceramics Biennale (Stoke on Trent), Contemporary Ceramics (Vallauris, France 2010), where it won the prize for sculptural work, and most recently for the Begehungen Arts Festival (Chemnitz, Germany, 2012).

To further explore the way bricks are treated as ubiquitous objects in the public domain, Burton has collaborated with street artists and museum visitors in the UK, Korea and Canada. This was evidenced internationally in the temporary installation *Enclosure* commissioned for ClayArch Gimhae Museum, Korea 2008), and *Buttress*, (Kitchener, Canada, 2011) (5). In these works local people were invited to make their own interventions into Burton’s work. Here, graffiti, more usually seen as a symptom of a dysfunctional cityscape, became an integral ingredient of the work, adding an extra gestural and colourful element to the tactility of the brick.

**3. References to the research**

- 1) Bricks and Bees: Andrew Burton, Projects in India and Holland, ed. Peter Suchin, Art Editions North, ISBN 9781873757666.  
<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/projects/Sculptures%20from%20a%20Land%20of%20Bricks%20and%20Termites.pdf>
- 2) *Making Bithooras* a collaborative project developed at the National Crafts Museum, New Delhi featuring ‘bithooras’ – cow dung structures made by village women in Delhi  
<http://www.axisweb.org/p/andrewburton>
- 3) *Things Fall Apart*, commissioned for *Materials and Mentalities*, UCD, Dublin as part of the 2008 World Congress of Archaeology. <http://www.andrewburton.org.uk/projects/things-fall-apart-0>
- 4) *Chimney*, commissioned works for ‘Art in the Workplace’, permanently sited as part of the Canary Wharf public art collection, London (2008). [www.canarywharf.com/visitus/Public-Art/Visual-Arts-at-Canary-Wharf/7-Andrew-Burton/](http://www.canarywharf.com/visitus/Public-Art/Visual-Arts-at-Canary-Wharf/7-Andrew-Burton/)
- 5) *Buttress*, commissioned for CAFKA ‘Survive. Resist’, Kitchener, Canada (2011)  
[www.andrewburton.org.uk/projects/buttress-cafka-2011](http://www.andrewburton.org.uk/projects/buttress-cafka-2011)

Awarded to	Grant Title	Sponsor	Dates	Value
Andrew Burton	Moonwalking, Connections Through Culture (India)	British Council	Mar 2010- Mar 2011	£5,000
Andrew Burton	Brickworks – Canary Wharf	Arts Council England (Grants for the Arts, Individual)	Nov 2010	£5,000
Andrew Burton	Sculpture from a Land of Ants and Bees	Arts Council England (Grants for the Arts, Individual)	Jan 2006	£5,000

**4. Details of the impact**



Burton’s research has helped to stimulate public and practitioner debate around the connections between sculpture, ceramics, craft and architecture. The research has had a worldwide reach, achieved through the public exhibition of artworks and through Burton’s contribution to practitioner focused workshops and conference presentations. His work has reached large audiences, enriching their cultural experiences and has engaged niche communities, such as bamboo breakers and dung workers (pictured left) in India whose practices reach new audiences through public exhibitions.

**Impact on cultural life: public opportunities to experience forms of new artistic expression**

Burton’s artworks make an explicit physical and visual connection between craft (e.g. brick as a

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form of fired ceramic/ bamboo weaving), architecture (brick as a ubiquitous building material) and sculpture. These qualities of Burton's work have been highlighted by The British Council which states: "[Burton's] projects are a response to the materiality of the world. By using commonly found and low value objects and substances such as brick, dung or bamboo to build simple structures, often architectural in appearance, but on an unexpected scale, we are invited to look again at the world immediately around us." (<http://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/people/andrew-burton/>).

The poetic materiality of Burton's art works has also been explored by architectural journalist Robert Such in his (2009) article for Art and Architecture Journal. Such writes: "*Jug*, as with Burton's other artworks created from the debris of former sculptures, embodies a sense of continuity with the past, whilst at the same time signifying the inevitable decay of its surroundings. Works such as this also point to ways of recycling demolition material into the new fabric of a city, leaving its visual traces there to remind us of a site's history prompting perhaps even personal memories, and the experiencing of a sense of belonging to a place" (**IMP1**). The importance of Burton's sculptural investigation of material 'decline and regeneration' has also been highlighted by maker-curator Helen Carnac, in her online showcase of artists 'Making and Unmaking, Repair and Repetition', commissioned by the major UK visual arts practitioner's website Axis (<http://www.axisweb.org>, 2010). This online exhibition was subsequently selected as one of 21 Axis highlights for its 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday year 2012 (**IMP2**).

In creating artworks for public presentation in urban sites and exhibition venues across the world: in Asia, North America and Europe, Burton's works have carried this distinctive sculpture-architecture-craft dialogue to a large public, within and beyond the traditional arts audience. Many of these are publicly sited works, where audiences, both deliberate 'visitors' and regular passers-by are invited to touch and experience the sculpture in a more direct way than a gallery-based work.



Burton's sculpture *Chimney* is permanently sited at Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London, as part of the award winning Canary Wharf public art collection. With around 100,000 people working at Canary Wharf every day this work has been seen and experienced by many thousands of people since 2008. In an email to Burton, one viewer commented on her own personal enjoyment of this work: 'I saw [your work] on a very wet day with dark grey skies but with the park looking wonderfully green and acting as an exciting backdrop to the rich terracotta of your sculptures.' (**IMP3, IMP4**).

In 'Ceramic City – Design for Public Space' (Stoke-on-Trent, Oct-Dec 2009) Burton's work was exhibited as part a major city-wide festival celebrating and showcasing contemporary ceramics from across the world. The exhibition of Burton's work was visited by a public audience of 10,000+ (<http://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com>). Burton's work *Jug*, won one of the festival's Public Art Awards. His work was featured in a four-page article and used as the back-cover image for the special ceramic biennial issue of Art and Architecture Journal (Autumn 2009) (**IMP5**).

Burton's work *Bittern* was commissioned for the Environmental Park at the Shanghai World Expo 'Better City – Better Life' (2010). While exact viewer figures for publicly sited artworks are unattainable, the Expo overall attracted a record breaking 73m visitors over its 184 days, the majority being Chinese visitors (<http://english.eastday.com/e/1111001/u1a6133087.html>).

The value of Burton's interdisciplinary contribution to the fine art and crafts field is further evidenced by the inclusion of his work in a variety of contemporary visual arts publications. These include: reference to Burton's sculptural ceramics in the survey work 'Contemporary Ceramics' (2009) by the highly respected crafts writer and critic Emmanuel Cooper, a publication reviewed as "an essential work" (The Sunday Telegraph) and "a sourcebook of the highest caliber" (Crafts Magazine) (**IMP5**); 'Out of India' a four page feature on Burton's Indian inspired works written by Robert Such for the international ceramic art and craft magazine Ceramic Review (Jan/Feb 2010. Readership: 40,000 per issue) (**IMP6**); inclusion in 'Ruby: Other Wordliness' (2011) a survey of contemporary artists working at the cross-over of art and culture compiled by Argentinian artist-

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curator Irana Douer (**IMP7**); and a four-page interview with Burton in the French catalogue publication 'S'imbriquer – Autour de la Brique' (Artists and Bricks) (2011) (**IMP8**).

### Impact on public discourse: stimulating practitioner-led debate within fine art, architecture and craft

Burton has been invited to lecture on his work internationally and is an active contributor to international fine art and ceramics conferences and symposia, being invited to present his projects and to share his research and working practices with arts and crafts practitioners in the UK and in Europe. Presentations have included:

- 'Sensuous Knowledge: Reflection, Relevance, Responsibility' (Bergen Art Academy, Norway, 2009) a three-day annual gathering of 85 practitioners. Here Burton's research on ceramic brick as a sculptural medium was shared as a case study with artists and curators seeking to evaluate new routes for artistic research and development.  
<http://sensuousknowledge.org/gammel/category/sk6/>
- The conference 'Ceramic City – Design for Public Space' (Stoke-on-Trent, Oct 2009) presented as part of the British Ceramics Biennial. Here Burton contributed to the conference session 'Guerrilla Ceramics - The ecology of the ceramic object - Political ceramic statements'. The YouTube video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIF2zGMKIA8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIF2zGMKIA8)) of Burton's talk has received 588 views (to date).
- The ceramic industry conference 'European Ceramic Context' (Bornholm, Denmark, 2010). A major international gathering of ceramics and glass practitioners and researchers, this conference addressed the situation of ceramic art and ceramic artists in the present cultural and industrial economy. Burton's conference presentation 'Making Bricks' considered basic methods of brick production in India showing how this had inspired a contemporary sculptural language. [www.europeanceramiccontext.com/events/conference/](http://www.europeanceramiccontext.com/events/conference/)
- 'Artification: Ideas and Practice' (Helsinki, Finland 2012) a three-day conference exploring the growing hybridisation of arts and social practice. Burton's presentation his work in India contributed to the debate by highlighting some of the ethical and creative considerations involved in cross-cultural practice. [www.artification.fi/conference2012.html](http://www.artification.fi/conference2012.html)
- 'Marking the line: Ceramics and Architecture' (London 2013) a symposium exploring the relationship between ceramics and architecture in the context of the exhibition 'Marking the Line' at the Sir John Soane Museum, London chaired by Glenn Adamson.

Burton has also received invitations to contribute to many arts research and education initiatives. These include invitations from: Clare Twomey and Edmund de Waal to speak at the conference 'Collaboration – research in ceramics now', University of Westminster Ceramics Research Centre (June 2010); five academis in Belgium, including the Academy of Visual Arts, Mechelen, to present his research as part of a project on architectural ceramics, 'Architec-Tour' (2011-2013); the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam to lecture on his work in India to a joint group of architecture and ceramics working on a collaborative and experimental brick project (**IMP9**).

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- (**IMP1**) Such, R. (2009) 'Andrew Burton: Bricks and the City'. *Art and Architecture Journal* (Autumn, 2009), pp.24-27 (& cover illustration).
- (**IMP2**) Carnac, H. (2010) *Making and Unmaking, Repair and Repetition*. Available at: <http://www.axisweb.org/atSelection.aspx?SELECTIONID=20443>.
- (**IMP3**) Link: <http://www.canarywharf.com/aboutus/Media/News/Public-Art/>
- (**IMP4**) Email to Andrew Burton, 30.05.08 (Elizabeth Guest).
- (**IMP5**) Book: Cooper, E. (2010) *Contemporary Ceramics*. London: Thames and Hudson. ISBN 978-0-500-51487-0.
- (**IMP6**) Feature article: Such, R. (2010) 'Out of India'. *Ceramic Review* (Jan/Feb 2010). Print copy available on request.
- (**IMP7**) Book: Douer, I. (2011) *Ruby: Otherworldliness*. Berlin: Gestalten, Berlin. ISBN 978-3-89955-343-7. Print copy available on request.
- (**IMP8**) Catalogue publication *S'imbriquer: Autour de la Brique*, (2011) Milan: Silvana Editoriale. ISBN 978-8836620876. Print copy available on request.
- (**IMP9**) Copies of private emails containing feedback on these events are available on request.